

Dear Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Planning and Development:

My name is Eileen Jacobs Sweeney. I am a Connecticut resident and I, and my husband and adult children, also Connecticut residents, strongly urge you to support HB5170 An Act Concerning the Tethering and Sheltering of Dogs.

This legislation is long overdue in Connecticut. Connecticut suffers from extremely harsh winters -- this year we had record-breaking cold -- and sweltering summers. Many states around us already have these protections in place for animals.

The bill is straightforward, humane, and fair. It seeks to protect dogs during extreme weather conditions before they show visible signs of suffering and distress when it's evident the weather poses a threat to the dog's welfare.

Significantly, it gives Animal Control Officers clear direction and the necessary tools to help before the situation becomes life-threatening.

The bill passed the House overwhelmingly in 2018. Now we need to finish what was begun four years ago.

Thank you for your consideration. I/we urge the Committee to pass HB 5170.

We would also like to add an urgent call that future legislation should include other animals who should be humanely treated with compassionate consideration, whether they be cats, rabbits, horses, cows, donkeys, goats, etc. Humans are well past the time when our brains and hearts should have caught up with science and emotional intelligence. Just put ourselves in the circumstances of another sentient being and we should be convinced that animals feel discomfort, pain, and loneliness as humans do. Legislation should also define shelter as that of being sensible -- saturated blankets and dog houses do not adequately serve the purpose of keeping a living being warm or cool.

We greatly appreciate your time, attention, and consideration in receiving our thoughts on the matter and for taking steps to care for our animal companions and animals in the wild.

Sincerely,

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